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we first went up there they[1] charged us two dollars for every skin of water we took and a dollar for four coconuts, which we were reduced to buying as we had no other food and were stuck for a couple of days waiting for cars from the Hadhramaut. On that first visit one very nearly shot me for trying to take his photograph, but now he is more than ready to pose. During the two nights we were waiting for cars the Ba Hasanis were a little nervous as they had murdered some one shortly before and were expecting an attack, so we had to build rough stone forts. When we had lent a hand we suggested that we should be paid for our labour as they had charged us for everything, but they did not like the idea and spent the night on sentry go droning monotonously to keep themselves awake. One good lady of the Ba Hasanis dresses as a man with dagger and all, and likes to be called Sheikh Salim. She is the only one of the women who does not veil. The habit of veiling varies a lot through the different tribes of the Hadhramaut and quite a number of them go uncovered.

When the peace was established it became possible to complete the Al Kaf road and it was opened by Sir Bernard Reilly in July last. It is now a toll road administered by a Board and half its revenue is being accumulated for capital works and improvements and half is being spent on maintenance. The maintenance expenditure is becoming very heavy as the daily buses do a lot of damage. The fees for the use of the road are designed not only to give revenue but also in conjunction with minimum fares to protect the Badawin camel traffic. Indeed goods are not allowed to be carried by road unless they are perishable, too heavy for camels, or urgent, in all of which cases the freight charged has to be higher than that which would be charged for camel transport.

It is about nine and a half to ten hours' solid driving from Shihr to Tarim, though of course one usually stops for a meal and that makes it about twelve hours. After leaving Ma'adi the road runs along the well-named Jol al Fiqra or Backboned Plateau, a ridge from which magnificent views to the sea 20 to 30 miles away and over deep wadis are obtained. After that the scenery tends to become monotonous, particularly when you have done the drive a dozen times or more, as it dodges endlessly round flat topped hills and wadi heads, and after the *'aqaba* of Ma'adi the remaining 130 miles or so are a series of levels from which you climb or descend by quite modest hills. Two hours on from Ma'adi you come to Reidat al Ma'ara, the country of the Ma'ara tribe, a collection of small scattered villages in country intersected by shallow wadis which offer some chance of cultivation. There are some wells, but the people depend very largely on *qarifs*, open water-holes built to collect the rain-water. The Ma'ara, who are friendly folk, are also distantly related to the Hamumis. They never give any trouble though there are one or two of them who are terrific litigants, and are always coming to see me in Mukalla or the Hadhramaut about cases which I have had investigated by several independent tribunals with invariably the same result. Most of these squabbles are land squabbles and that is a source of the greater part of the litigation in the Hadhramaut.

Reida is the place where one generally stops for lunch, as it is very nearly half way. The pleasantest place I think is under a tree near one of the *qarifs*,

1 [THE BA HASAN TANBULIS = ANALYST.]